

Isaac Chase Mill
Sixth East Street in Liberty Park
Salt Lake City
Salt Lake County
Utah

HABS No. U-49

HABS
UTAH
18-SALCI
13-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. U-49

ISAAC CHASE MILL

Location: Sixth East Street in Liberty Park, Salt Lake City,
Salt Lake County, Utah
Latitude: 40° 44' 36" N Longitude: 111° 52' 25" W

Present Owner: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Salt Lake Company

Present Occupant: Daughters of Utah Pioneers

Present Use: Relic Hall

Statement of
Significance: This is the only remaining original grist mill
in Salt Lake City, still on its original site.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

Isaac Chase (1852)
Brigham Young (1860)
Salt Lake City (1882)
Daughters of Utah Pioneers

2. Date of erection: 1852

3. Architect: None

4. Builder, suppliers, etc.: Isaac Chase, builder; Thares Wells Sr., carpenter; William Weeks, (Architect of the Narvoo Temple); Samuel Ensign, foreman; John Sanders, Robert Smithen, Frank Turnbow, John Canady, workers.

5. Original plan and construction: The following account is related by Emma Chase Covey following a tour of the site with Philip J. Garn, who worked in the mill:

"We went on to Liberty Park up the center road to the mill. We got out again and he took me over to about 30 feet from the main door of the mill (south) and said, 'Here is where they unloaded the adobes for the mill.' Then he showed me at the west of the mill where after the water went from the mill pond to the mill, it then emptied into the creek at the west. We walked around the mill. 'Here is a door at the west where Isaac Chase used to go into the place where the water wheel was located. It was under the original stairway you see in the southwest corner and on the north of the mill. Here is the small

door Isaac Chase used to come out to turn the water on the wheel to raise the gate.' (Wheel under stairs by northwest corner - shaft of wheel by cellar opening.) He pulled up a small door, like a cellar door, to show me where the shaft of the wheel was. Then we walked over to the cabin where by the mill, on the north side, stands the original burrs Isaac Chase brought across the plains and a part of a burr by the door. He told me that Isaac Chase brought the three burrs that stand in front of the log cabin just before his share of the mill was sold to Brigham Young. 'Now,' he said, 'the water went out of the millpond right east of the mill. When the millpond was full he could run the mill four hours each day.'"

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:

The Liberty Park area in Salt Lake City was originally called "The Big Field" by early pioneers. The area was bounded by 9th South, 13th and 15th East, 21st South and 3rd West and 5th West. Liberty was Block 19 in the Big Field. When the pioneers first came to the valley the head of each family was given a city lot for farming. One of these tracts went to Isaac Chase, a miller, who arrived in 1857. (Chase was born in Rhode Island in 1791. He married Phoebe Ogden Ross and they settled in Sparta, New York, where their children were born. They moved to Nauvoo, Illinois in 1840 where they lived until the Mormons were expelled in 1846. They came across the plains with the Jedediah M. Grant Company and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on September 20, 1847.) His five acre section had a spring of clear water on the northwest corner. Thinking this a prospective millpond, Chase bought the adjoining fifteen acres. He erected a small upright sawmill on the site to provide lumber for shelter and for a gristmill. He built a one room shanty of rough boards for his family which served as kitchen, bedroom and living room. He also built a small grist mill for the cracking of corn.

In 1852, Chase supervised and helped erect the mill which now stands in Liberty Park. The walls were constructed of adobe made on the old Church Farm at a place now known as Forest Dale Golf Club. The adobes were held together with clay mortar, since no lime was then available. Framework was heavy timber, mortised and held together with wooden pins. The timbers were bored from end to end with two-inch holes to prevent dry rot. When the Mill was finished, the Chase Home, also still standing in Liberty Park, was built of the same materials.

During this time Chase bought ten acres in the southeast corner of the area (13th South and 7th East, Southeast corner, now a ball park) which contained a number of natural springs. These were used for power and irrigation,

and were known as the Chase Springs. He took the water diagonally across the street to the millpond. The water went out of the millpond east of the mill, then out of the mill on the west side into a large creek. When the pond was full he could run the mill four hours a day.

Brigham Young became a partner in the mill in 1854, and in 1860 the entire property was transferred to him: Chase was given 110 acres of untilled land in Centerville, Utah, but never lived there; rather he gave the land to his son George and moved into a little adobe house he had built near the Salt Lake Theatre in the early days. He died on May 2, 1861, just one year after leaving his mill home. The Mill ceased operating in 1884. By that time the park had grown until it covered 100 acres. The City of Salt Lake bought it from the Brigham Young estate on June 17, 1882 for \$27,500 and renamed it Liberty Park.

The old mill was used as a tool house for a time, then allowed to deteriorate. For a while there were pressures to have it torn down, but it was saved through the efforts of a descendant of Isaac, Kate Chase. Subsequently, it was sold to the Daughters of Utah Pioneers to be used as a relic hall and museum. The DUP restored the building in 1959 and it is presently open to the public.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Original photograph of Mill in 1906 by W. B. Ellerbeck and B. B. Ellerbeck, Pioneer Memorial Museum, Salt Lake City.

Utah Historical Society Subject File; Isaac Chase, Chase Farm, Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City.

2. Bibliography:

Bunnell, L. L., Liberty Park Reflections, The Wick, Volume 3, No. 5, October, 1967, Salt Lake City.

Carter, Kate B., The Chase Mill, 1852, Liberty Park, Utah Printing Co., 1957, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Tales of a Triumphant People, a History of Salt Lake County, 1847-1900, Stevens and Wallis Press, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1947.

Prepared by John L. Giusti, AIA
July 23, 1968

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural interest: Early adobe industrial building.
2. Condition of fabric: Restored 1959 and maintained by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers. Probable earlier restoration c.1900.

B. Detailed Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This two-story mill is a rectangular structure, 40' x 50'. It is six bays long and three bays wide.
2. Foundations: Red sandstone; not exposed above grade; original grade at west probably lower.
3. Wall construction, finish, and color: Adobe blocks now covered with plaster, painted buff. Gable lettering "1852," "B.Y.," probably c.1900.
4. Structural system, framing: Wood posts, beams and joists.
5. Porches and stoops: Doorsills, red sandstone. Steps etc., new concrete.
6. Chimneys: One brick on west wall, covered with plaster; probably an addition to original building.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Vertical boards (2" x 6" T and G) with interior battens, part of 1959 restoration.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Double hung six-over-six, 10" x 12" lights; 10" x 18 1/2" south second floor. Clerestory, fixed sash, 9 lights, 8" x 10".
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gabled clerestory. Cedar shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: No overhang.

C. Detailed Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Open rectangular plan, each floor with double row of columns. Holes in second floor beams indicate earlier stud walls following column line.
2. Stairway: Not original but approximates original location in northwest corner.
3. Flooring: 6" pine boards, new at second floor.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Adobe blocks exposed and whitewashed second floor and plastered and painted first floor. First floor - knotty pine wainscot added 1959.
5. Decorative features and trim: First floor columns tapered and chamfered with tapered bolsters having curved ends.
6. Lighting, type of fixtures: Electric, pseudo-kerosene ceiling fixtures.

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. Orientation: Major entrance door in south gable end; east side faces Sixth East Street which bisects Liberty Park, a 60 acre area in which the mill is centrally located.
2. Outbuildings: A log cabin has been moved to an enclosure just north of the mill.
3. Landscaping and walks, enclosures: The mill is surrounded by a cyclone fence. The ornamental lake across the street may approximate the location of the original millpond. Grades have probably been leveled somewhat.

Prepared by Paul Goeldner, AIA
Supervisory Architect
Utah Project 1968
June 11 & 12, 1968

2. Stairway: Not original but approximates original location in northwest corner.
3. Flooring: 6 inch pine boards, new at second floor.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Adobe blocks exposed and white-washed second floor and plastered and painted first floor. First floor: knotty pine wainscot.
5. Decorative features and trim: First floor columns tapered and chamfered with tapered bolsters having curved ends.
6. Lighting, type of fixtures: Electric, pseudo-kerosene ceiling fixtures.

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. Orientation: Major entrance door in south gable end; east side faces Sixth East Street which bisects Liberty Park, a 60 acre area in which the mill is centrally located.
2. Outbuildings: A log cabin has been moved to an enclosure just north of the mill
3. Landscaping and walks, enclosures: The mill is surrounded by a cyclone fence. The ornamental lake across the street may approximate the location of the original millpond. Grades have probably been leveled somewhat.

Prepared by Paul Goeldner, AIA
Supervisory Architect
Utah Project 1968
June 11 & 12, 1968

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This record is part of a Utah Survey conducted in the summers of 1967 and 1968 under joint sponsorship of the Historic American Buildings Survey of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation of the National Park Service and the Utah Heritage Foundation.

Field work, historic research and record drawings were done under the direction of Project Supervisor Paul Goeldner, AIA, (Texas Tech University) assisted by Project Historian John Giusto, AIA (University of Utah),

Student Assistant Architects on the 1967 team were Robert M. Swanson and Charles W. Barrow, (University of Texas) and Kenneth L. Lambert and Keith Sorenson, (University of Utah). 1968 Student Assistant Architects were Keith Sorenson, Charles D. Harker and Robert Schriever, (University of Utah) and Donald G. Prycer, (Texas A & M. University).